

Jenny Lind in the Messiah.

On Friday evening took place the fifth of the most musical festivals that it has ever been our privilege in this country to enjoy. The genius and skill of the artists, the admirable discipline of the orchestra and chorus, and the general cast of the whole arrangement, make these Concerts of Jenny Lind because of the highest character at the present stage of musical taste. Nor can we enter upon a notice of the performance of *Hallelujah! Messiah*, on Friday evening, without an expression of gratitude to Mr. Barnum for the skill with which he manages all the details of the evening, and the most liberal manner in which above mentioned were prepared for the church—for not only was sufficient room afforded, even at the expense of some of the seats in the Hall, but the slope of the temporary stage was such as to give the full effect to the chorus. Quite rare are we, that when Jenny Lind has left us, we shall hear many times in that same Hall to the quiet ease and liberality, to the general satisfaction arrangement of her Concerts. And, upon an occasion like that of Friday evening, the accessories of sufficient importance to be separately regarded.

The occasion was peculiar in this—that it was Jenny Lind's first appearance in America in a single work—the having hitherto sung only scenes and songs from Operas, or the little characteristic Northern melodies. And although as *Oratoro* takes all the dramatic unity, and force, and development of an Opera, and is in its very nature exceedingly imperfect, and always somewhat tedious in the performance, yet it has a quality of feeling in the various parts which presents any delineated effect upon the mind of a listener who readily receives the meaning of the music. Then, in the *Messianic*, the Soprano sings one strain of sentiment—the Tenor another—the Bass another—and so the unity and harmony is preserved.

After the purpose somewhat chaotic overture, Mr. Colburn gave the "Comfort ye, comfort my people," followed by Bellini in "Thus said the Lord of hosts." His pronunciation of English was surprisingly accurate and good, and the rhythmic and air were delivered with the most perfect propriety of taste, and with all the sonorous volume of a voice now so well known to us. Indeed throughout the evening Signor Bellini showed a justness and delicacy of appreciation of the character of this music, which we hardly recall in any Southern artist. In Italy, Handel is almost entirely a name, and the early history of Italian musical art is so full of native and characteristic masters that the Italians have no occasion, had they the desire, to study the subtle solemnities of the North. Later in the evening Signor Bellini sang with the utmost force and expression—*Why do ye grieve?* His pure Italian style was not lost upon these ears, nor ever was the elegant artistic cultivation more effective.

But we must especially speak of the chorus, which from the beginning had shown its remarkable discipline, and which thundered out the "Wondrous" chorus with a grandeur that we have never heard equalled, and which was certainly far beyond any chord performance we have ever heard in New York. The fine adjustment—the beautiful balance—the shading of such a mass of sound, was a very great triumph, and the choral singing of Friday evening will be memorable in the annals of our music. This chorus so increased the income, that it was universally and most warmly received, and again delivered with the same force and precision.

We must compliment all lovers of music and all artists upon the presence among us of the New-York Harmonic Society—so whom we are indebted for the magnifico choral performance—of whose existence indeed we were hardly aware, until hearing thus. Miserly like, superbly photographed upon our attention. The Pastoral Symphony followed, and then Jenny Lind arose.

In her rising arose all Syrian imagery, and the serenity and depth and warmth of those skies, were the expression and feeling and character of her singing to the end. In the singing of a fine Opera or Oratorio, the triumph of art consists in the precision and force with which the fullness of the composer's meaning is impressed upon the hearer by the artist. First of all to this end. The proper conception of the impression to be conveyed is necessary. Then the ample means of conveying it, and such a mastery of those means that even in the lavish profusion of them they shall only the more suggest and convey the meaning of the composer. Hence, a really great artist, in whatever kind, is successful when his means are so transparent that you seem to see and feel the thing intended, almost without consciousness of medium—a great result which Turner seems constantly striving, perhaps is too singly striving to attain in Painting, and which is always attained by any picture which presents to your mind a poetic beauty, and by any musical scene in which the sentiment and not the vocalization is paramount in the impression. How often a skillful singer, without genius, desiring to astonish the ear, loses to the mind the whole meaning of a scene and makes it simply absurd. For only consummate artists can redeem the Opera from absurdity, because they do not allow you to dwell upon the expression, but fill your mind with the sentiment expressed. The poetical application of which remark simply this. That a great art is determined to be such, not primarily by the excellence of the quality of his skill, but by its success in representing the intended emotion, and we should find, for instance, to be artistically greater who, in presenting Lucrezia, should cause a Poet to say—"It was like a thunder storm in the Appenines," rather than she who would give no image to the Poet, but cause ecstasy in the connoisseur of vocalization.

Measured by this rule, what a sublime artistic performance was Jenny Lind's singing of the Soprano of the *Messianic*! She was dressed in pure white with a wreath of white roses around her head, and this external property of personal appearance was only the emblem of that profound property of appreciation which breathed like sunshine through all her performance. The serene joy—the deep peace—the sublime faith of Christianity—was the theme of all she sang. But not alone in the sonorous and sweetly simple scripture phrases—nor in the pathos and solemn melody of the music—lay the perfection of the impression, but in these, combined with a feeling as faithful, and a sunny serenity—a profound plenitude of delivery, which revealed, what a friend so happily terms "the celestiality" of this singer. The present critic has never yet had the happiness to hear any sermon so soul-touching as her "Come unto him, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and he will give you rest." For the first time we seemed to hear that imitation with something of the same feeling with which the original hearers listened. That air, it seems to us, must have convinced the most obstinate devotee of Italian passion, that if Jenny Lind could not 'do' the *Lucrezia* or the *Norma*, she could 'do' what it does not enter into the mind of Italian passion to conceive, and doing that did perhaps, suggest shrewd suspicions that there was 'soul' in her singing after all.

This air pleased us more than any other of the evening. More even than "*I know that my Redeemer liveth*"—which was yet exquisitely sung and unanimously encored. The articulation of the words and of the language with which the entire cast of her singing in this air, was beautiful as it was.

We find our heart overflowing to the point of that rapture over which she triumphed and sang so sweetly and sweetly—the voice seeming to symbolize the earnest appeal to which she allured, dying at the foot of the cross, as a sky-lighting bark in the storm—had to be classified as the best.

We cannot hesitate to pronounce the performance of the *Messianic* to be by far the grandest musical event that has yet transpired in New York, and so, we suppose, with Boston's permission, in America. We were certainly surprised at the appreciating and inflaming attention of so large an audience for three hours to a work hardly comparable at one hearing, and at least so severe in its outlines, and so utterly different from the music we love to hear. We have already said that there is an essential reason in the performance of an oratorio, but if it was ever removed, it was on Friday. There might also be a few minor criticisms which are lost, however, in the rare general excellence of the performance. The *Hallelujah*, that most difficult of choruses, lagged a little in pace, and there was an unaccustomed in the trumpets in Signor Bellini's last air which was unnecessary in such an orchestra.

Not can we close without once more expressing our great admiration of the moral effects of the evening. With such a drama there is no reason why we should not have in New York an *Oratorio* as well performed as in any city of the world, whenever there are artists for the separate acts. For the rest, we most cordially rejoice all the ringing and lingering not to delay longer, for Jenny Lind is not to pass the Winter with us, and they may then recall with regret the meanest choky Turkish proverb—the loss is lamented in the losing.

PUBLIC MEETING
OF THE NEW-YORK PRINTERS UNION.

Reception of Scale of Prices, &c.

Pursuant to resolution, a public meeting of the New-York Printers Union was held yesterday evening, Nov. 3, at Tammany Hall. There were from 300 to 350 Journeyman Printers present. E. H. Rogers, Vice President of the Union presided, and F. J. O'Farrell acted as Secretary.

Thomas H. Green, by request, read a brief report of the doings of the Union, for the brief period of its existence, as follows:

PALACE CLOTHES.—The being a public meeting of the New-York Printers Union, in which the trade generally has been invited to witness to you a portion of the proceedings of our Society since its organization.

The Printers' Union of the City of New York came into existence on the 1st of January, 1850, and was organized for the purpose of presenting, in a short time, a uniform scale of prices for all printing professionals, and which has not yet rung for some time.

We come now to some of our early triumphs—any late success. Yet we are sure, that none have been accomplished with more difficulty than the creation of our scale of prices, as we have done.

We must especially speak of the chorus which from the beginning had shown its remarkable discipline, and which thundered out the "Wondrous" chorus with a grandeur that we have never heard equalled, and which was certainly far beyond any chord performance we have ever heard in New York. The fine adjustment—the beautiful balance—the shading of such a mass of sound, was a very great triumph, and the choral singing of Friday evening will be memorable in the annals of our music. This chorus so increased the income, that it was universally and most warmly received, and again delivered with the same force and precision.

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And, though the Printers' Union has been created, we hope to increase our numbers, and we include the hope that the day is not far distant when a better rate of prices will be obtained, and a more substantial and permanent basis given to the scale of prices.

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